DEPARTMENT OF STATE

729

Memorandum of Conversation

SECRET

DATE: June 19, 1954

SUBJECT: Mexican Views on Draft Resolution on Guatemala

PARTICIPANTS: Ambassador of Mexico Manuel Tello
Mexican Minister Counselor Rafael Nieto
Assistant Secretary of State Henry F. Holland

COPIES TO: ARA - Mr. Woodward, Mr. Pearson, Ambassador Pawley
AR - Ambassador Dreier, Mr. Jamison, Mr. Sanders
ARA/P - Mr. Wieland, Mr. Herron
MID - Mr. Burrows, Mr. Belton
MID - Mr. Leddy
Amembassy Guatemala - informally
Amembassy Mexico City - informally

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The Ambassador said that he had received instructions from his government with respect to our last draft of resolution. They were the following:

(1) The Mexican Government feels that the first section of the whereas clauses is too long and may give rise to debates.

(2) The third paragraph from the last in the first section of the whereas clauses recites that the nations of this hemisphere will attempt to protect among other things "their way of life". Mexico feels that this indication of satisfaction with a way of life that is characterized by ignorance and poverty is inappropriate, and that the wording should be changed.

(3) The first paragraph in the second group of whereas clauses refers to "a large clandestine shipment". Mexico suggests substitution of the word secret because of the implication from the word clandestine that the ALFHEM shipment was illegal.

I pointed out to the Ambassador that it was precisely the illegality of the ALFHEM shipment that has created a very great part of our problem. In other words, by resort to the illegal falsification of shipping documents the Guatemalan Government has made it impossible for the United States

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states to rely upon the sanctity of those same documents upon which the freedom of international trade must rest. He replied that he felt sure that his government had not appreciated this implication of the word, and that he would submit an explanation.

(4) Referring to the third paragraph of the second group of whereas clauses and to the words that evidence has been presented "from various authoritative sources", he said that Mexico feels it is very important that evidence be adduced at the hearing from sources other than the United States. Mexico would not insist that this evidence be formally made a part of the record, but does feel that the action which might be taken would be much more defensible if it could be said that states other than the United States had submitted evidence. In this I am in entire accord with him.

(5) Referring to the second paragraph of the "finding" clauses and to the statement that the recent movement of arms "has created a threat" in Central America, he emphasized that Mexico feels that specific proof should be offered as to the manner in which this arms shipment has produced a threat. The generality that an arms shipment produces a threat, makes our case weak. On the other hand, even perfunctory evidence of the specific ways in which this shipment is translated into a threat would satisfy their requirements. As possible means of drawing this relationship he suggested evidence of Communist or Guatemalan intervention in the Honduran strike.

(6) Referring to the paragraph regarding the commission of five countries and to the word "shall assist the member states", he said that Mexico would like to substitute for these words the phrase "shall advise those member states who so request".

I stated that such a substitution would be satisfactory to the United States but that it would not be satisfactory to those states who feel that the activities of the United States in the implementation of the resolution should be subject to scrutiny on the part of other states whether we so request or not. I pointed out the fear that exists in some states that the United States would abuse the procedure of stopping and detaining ships, and how this fear is dispelled by the necessity of keeping the commission informed of our actions under the resolution. He seemed satisfied with this explanation and said he would transmit it to his government.

(7) Still referring to the commission he said that Mexico felt that the resolution should affirmatively accord to the commission a function of investigating ways and means of eliminating communism from the Guatemalan Government.

I said that we had deliberately abstained from any such statement

for fear

for fear that such a resolution could cause various states which had current disputes with their neighbors to ask that the commission look into their problems as well, thus permitting local disagreements to defeat the hemispheric purposes of the resolution. I urged that we allow the resolution to stand in this respect, pointing out that in order to determine when circumstances justifying the preventive measures no longer exist, the commission would necessarily have to investigate conditions within Guatemala. He seemed satisfied with this explanation.

(8) Referring to the "calls upon" clauses he said that Mexico approves the first, but feels that the second is repetitive and could be replaced with other language.

I replied that these two clauses had been drafted by Chancellor Rao of Brazil and that I would urge all parties to leave them intact unless they present genuine and basic problems. Otherwise, we might find ourselves in a debate with Chancellor Rao which could weaken the strength of the pro-resolution group without achieving any basic improvement in the resolution itself.

I thanked him for his government's comments, saying that a number of them seemed to be quite helpful. He said that he would transmit my remarks and report back as to his government's reaction.

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